The No. 1 Issue in the Powell Case, P. 2

Let's Just Hope They Don't Improve Too Much

"Policy-makers . . . fear headlines about 'highest losses of the war' will fuel the arguments of U.S. doves. . . . 'It's hard to explain to people,' concedes a high officer, 'that the higher casualties mean we're doing a better job'."

—*The* Wall Street Journal's *weekly Washington Wire, March 10.*

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It Wasn't For Lack of Spies That The Czars Fell

Our public controversy over the CIA coincides with the 50th anniversary of the Czar's overthrow. There couldn't be a better time to remember that it wasn't for lack of spies that the Russian monarchy fell. No government—except Stalin's—had a more widespread network of secret intelligence operatives at home and abroad than the Romanoffs. The Tsars felt, as do American apologists for our own network, that they were up against a sinister, Godless and crafty foe, against whom any tactics were justified to save Holy Russia. Those who exposed police practices were regarded as disloyal.

Ravening Wolves?

In my library is a book published in 1930 in London on *The Ochrana, The Russian Secret Police* by its last chief, A. T. Vassilyev, who died in exile. When I read the apologetics being offered for the CIA, I pulled Vassilyev's memoirs off my shelf. I thought the vigorous going-over that press, radio and TV have given the CIA a wonderful manifestation of health in our own body politic. I was appalled to see even so good a liberal as John Kenneth Galbraith turn out a subtle defense of "the Agency" and speak of "the ravening wolves which in Washington pounce on any individual or agency which has problems" (*Washington Post,* March 12). Vassilyev, like Katzenbach whitewashing the CIA, defends the *Ochrana's* activities as "always strictly legal." Vassilyev attributes its bad reputation to its adversaries. "It is to be ascribed to the propaganda of these scoundrels," Vassilyev wrote, "that the Secret Political Police acquired such an evil reputation, for the revolutionaries naturally did their utmost to bring discredit upon their bitterest enemy." This is the line today of the CIA, the FBI and the ten other assorted if less glamorized spy organizations—a dozen, no less—represented on the U.S. Intelligence Board. We have but scratched the surface of their pervasive and corrupting influence in eroding the foundations of American freedom. These professional hunters of subversion are our No. 1 subversives.

Just as Central Intelligence was established under Truman in 1947 (when the cold war began) to keep the President posted, so the Ochrana was the Czar's eyes and ears. Twice a month the Ochrana provided the Czar with a publication of which only a single copy was ever printed—for his august eyes alone. "His Majesty was always very desirous," Vassilyev recalled, "of being minutely posted on all the details of the revolutionary movement and of the fight being waged against it. He attached great value to complete accounts of the discovery of secret printing presses, of plots, forbidden libraries." The Czar was even supplied with copies of private letters in which Tolstoy "had given expression to his anti-militarist views." For just as the U.S. has "mail-covers" (as Senator Long of Missouri discovered) so the Ochrana had an elaborate system for reading private correspondence, including invisible ink and codes. This practice, Vassilyev assured his readers, "was never directed against orderly subjects of the Czar but only "seditious elements." The "real honest Russians" (like the real honest Americans?) "were really proud of their

(*Continued on Page Four*)

LBJ's Freudian Slip: Invasion of the North

At his press conference March 10, President Johnson for the first time spoke of our action against the North as an invasion. "We would be glad to stop our invasion of the North," he said, "if they would stop their invasion of South Vietnam." Was this a Freudian slip, or deliberate? If what we are doing is already decribed as an invasion, then sending in ground troops could be described—in the familiar Johnson era style—as no escalation! The Guam conference also suggests that an invasion may be in the works. One pointer is the belated invitation to Marshal Ky. Our military do not trust their puppets: from a security standpoint, they leak like a sieve. They are fine for propaganda powwows, as at Honolulu and Manila, but not for serious business. Another pointer is that (according to the Wash. Post March 13) Westmoreland is to be made area commander, with direct control of air and naval operations against the North. Coordination would be necessary for an invasion.

The risks are rising. The attack on the Thai Nguyen steel works was an attack on the only major industrial plant in the North, a 25-square mile showpiece financed by the Soviet Union. This was an economic, not a military, target—and another humiliation for Moscow. The Russians can, if they choose, escalate on their own. They have never given the North SA-3s. Malcolm W. Browne told the recent Nation conference in Los Angeles (see L.A. Times March 5) that "U.S. experts believe this would make continued American raids over the North so costly as to be impractical." They could also supply surface-to-surface missiles, Browne said, "with which the North could knock out a selection of South Vietnamese targets and perhaps even make it hot for the 7th fleet." An invasion would sharply increase the possibility of a confrontation with Moscow, Peking or both. The time to protest is now. Once invasion starts, it will be too late.

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The Legal Morass Into Which the House Fell in Its Haste to Punish

The No. 1 Issue in the Exclusion of Adam Clayton Powell

If Adam Clayton Powell were a white member of the House of Representatives, we would all agree without difficulty that he deserved some form of punishment for his conduct. But Congressman Conyers of Detroit, the one Negro on the committee which investigated Powell, sought very wisely to distinguish two different powers of the House. One was its power to punish a member for misconduct, the other its power to exclude a duly elected Representative.

Sentence Without Trial

The committee investigating Powell recommended fines and censure and loss of seniority as a way of appeasing the anti-Powell sentiment in the House and saving his seat. But fines are a form of punishment for courts to impose after trial, and censure seemed to us (as to Conyers) offensively disproportionate. There have been only three cases of censure in the history of the House and these all involved bribery. The offenses of which Powell is accused are neither so major or so clear (see the Comptroller General's letter, pps. H934-6, *Con. Rec.* March 1) as to warrant so humiliating a punishment. The House is still unwilling to deal effectively with the far more serious abuse involved in conflicts of interest.

It seems to us unfair to punish Powell by censure, fine or otherwise without a trial. The charges against him fell into two categories. One was the misuse of public funds; the other, his disobedience of New York court orders. The former involved a violation of the law, to be tried like any other crime in a court of law; the House could not properly act as judge and jury, without the semblance of trial. The latter was even more a question for adjudication in the courts, since it involved alleged contempts. The tangle in the New York Courts has yet to be finally unravelled, and Powell seems to be winning on certain crucial aspects.

The House decision to exclude Powell sets a dangerous precedent, as Congressman Celler warned. It is unfortunate that the intent of the Framers, the language of the Constitution and the existing precedents are fuzzy. The only qualifications for admission to membership are age, citizenship and residency, according to one provision of the Constitution. But another says "Each House shall be the judge of the elections, returns and qualifications of its own Members." How to reconcile them is a puzzle.

But it is certainly true, as Mr. Celler argued, that it is "incompatible with democratic elections" to add qualifications beyond those enumerated. The precedents for excluding Powell indicate the danger. They were set in periods of popular passion against Mormons, Confederates and anti-war radicals. As Congressman Ryan of New York said, "If today the House is able to exclude a member because it disapproves of his conduct, tomorrow the House may feel free to do so because it disapproves of his opinions, philosophy or political action." This has become the No. 1 issue in the Powell case.

Gruening: No Draftees for Vietnam

"President Johnson's request of March 6, 1967, that the Selective Service Law, due to expire on June 30, be extended for four years, should give the Congress an opportunity to examine the moral and legal bases for sending draftees to fight, against their will, in Vietnam—in an undeclared and illegal war 10,000 miles from our shores. As I did in the last Congress it is my intention to introduce an amendment providing that no draftee can be sent to Southeast Asia without his consent. . . . The President has not asked Congress for a declaration of war yet he seeks authority to draft American boys and send them to Southeast Asia to fight in bloody, cruel military battles unsanctioned by law. Is it any wonder that many thousands of American boys are morally tormented about fighting in Vietnam? The Johnson Administration is telling the American people repeatedly that the dangers from the Soviet Union are less and less. . . . Yet the same Administration tells the American people the dangers of Soviet aggression in Europe are so great and continuing that it cannot risk reducing its troop commitments in Europe—over 250,000 men—but must instead draft American boys to serve against their will in Vietnam. If men are needed to replace them, let the draftees be sent to Europe. . . . In 1965 there were 96,000 desertions from the South Vietnamese Army. In 1966 that figure had climbed to 110,000 men. No one knows how high it will go in 1967. . . . Are we drafting American boys to replace the South Vietnamese draft dodgers? That is directly contrary to President Johnson's own statement of Sept. 28, 1964, in which he said, 'We are not going north and we are not going south; we are going to try to get them to save their own freedom with their own men'."

—Gruening (D. Ala) *in the Senate March 10*

Another Item for Collectors of Plain and Fancy Lying in the Vietnam War

"Robert J. McCloskey, the State Department spokesman, was asked by newsmen whether the attack on the Thai Nguyen [steel plant in North Vietnam] represented escalation or a change in bombing policy. 'No, it does not,' he replied. 'It's a plant that is involved in fabricating steel that is used for barges. That is used to increase infiltration. It's steel that is used in bridges, all of which falls into the category of legitimate military targets'."

—New York Times, *March 11 from Washington*

"Completion of the Thai Nguyen plant had been scheduled for late this year. As of June 1966, intelligence sources said, the plant was capable of producing 200,000 tons of cast iron a year. The steel furnaces, which have not been completed [emphasis added] had been expected to turn out 250,000 tons of steel annually."

—New York Times, *March 11 from Saigon*

"Dear Mr. Stone: I am a metallurgist by profession. The cast iron which is being produced at this (or any other) plant is not usable in bridges, barges or oil drums. It is a casting, not a rolled product. If you roll it, it cracks. You can't make girders or beams, plate or sheet, out of cast iron. The huge steel-making furnaces (necessary for melting steel) are evidently still inoperable, since they are not completed yet. You can't use half a furnace to make steel."

—A Reader

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Why the Constituent Assembly Is As Undemocratic A Farce as The Military

What "Pacification" Really Means to Vietnam's Landless Peasantry

In Vietnam, as in Washington, semantic trickery is the order of the day. "Pacification" means subjugation, and "Revolutionary Development Cadres"—the agents of pacification—are really counter-revolutionary police teams to subjugate the peasant. "Absentee landlords are still riding in with pacifying troops," writes Fred Emery, Saigon correspondent of the London *Times* (March 10), "not merely to grab back their lands but to extort back rents for the time they fled the Vietcong." Though a Ngo Dinh Diem law of 1955 limits rents to 25% of the crop, Emery notes that "landlords still extort rents as high as 60% of the product of a rice field" and adds "it is not hard to see why peasants keep their arms."

A Subject They'd Rather Avoid

Emery says "It may seriously be questioned whether any progress of lasting nature can be expected, in spite of military successes, so long as pacification continues without a real revolution in the Government's attitude towards land reform." He notes that "it is possible to listen to a senior OCO [Office of Civilian Operations, which handles the civilian end of the U.S. effort in South Vietnam] official talk for 90 minutes without once mentioning land—just as the subject has not found favor in the new Constituent Assembly." Emery fails to recognize that the Constituent Assembly is dominated by landlords, and that the American government has no real enthusiasm for land reform, especially since it would undercut the only class which supports the U.S. in the countryside.

The spectacle of landlords returning with the "pacification" teams to take back the land and collect back rents can hardly endear us to the peasants. "Senior American officials recognize the problem only too well," Emery writes, "and say, rather nervously, they are hoping the Government will shortly come up with a decree abolishing back rents." The "government" is the military junta. The Generals are either of, or linked to, the landlord class. To expect them to abolish back rents is as foolish as to expect them to decree land reform.

Richard Critchfield in the Washington *Sunday Star* (March 5) recalls that a year ago in Honolulu Johnson pledged "social revolution, including land reform", [Critchfield writes that the last three words were not in the original State Department draft for the Honolulu declaration but were added on "the insistence of the American counter-insurgency expert, Major General Edward G. Lansdale, Jr."]

Land reform was supposed to be the cornerstone of the new "revolutionary development program," but when Dr. Phan Quang Dan last December proposed that the Constitution guarantee every Vietnamese peasant the right to own the land he tilled, the measure got only 3 out of 117 votes. "Many deputies," Critchfield writes," said it sounded 'too much like communism.' He says later Dr. Dan "succeeded in getting a much milder proviso adopted pledging government help to the landless." But this (we discovered recently) says only (Art. XX) "The State advocates raising the standard of living of rural citizens, and especially helping farmers to have farmland." Just how is left unclear. Article XVIII guarantees the right of private property and says "expropriation or requisition for the common good must be accompanied by speedy and just compensation at price levels existing at the time of expropriation or requisition." This makes it impossible to pay for land reform in bonds nor to buy land at its original cost or tax valuation or even to take into account that it may have been acquired unlawfully. Such constitutional provisions are an obstacle to peaceful land reform in Latin America.

In the Mekong Delta, Critchfield writes, 50 percent of the peasantry is entirely landless and 80 percent rents all but a small part of their ricelands. Thus for the majority of the people the landlord-dominated Constituent Assembly is as unrepresentative a farce as the military junta.

The Kind of Regime Washington Likes

"Rio de Janeiro—This is the country that less than three years ago threatened to become not merely another Cuba but perhaps something close to another Red China. . . . To be sure the military regime . . . has been no model of democratic permissiveness. Brazilian journalists deemed too unfriendly to the government may find themselves behind bars. . . . More important than dictatorial benevolence are the clear signs of improving health being shown by the economy. . . . Price increases on everything from chicken feed to newspapers still occur regularly. The government printing presses continue to spin out cruzeiros . . . but U.S. firms are leading the investment parade. . . . Under a new investment guarantee agreement with the U.S., Brazil since 1965 [when the military took over—IFS] has approved more than $120 million worth of new projects by U.S. firms . . . beside the rules limiting pay increases to percentages well below the rate at which the cost of living is rising, there is an almost total prohibition against strikes."

—Wall Street Journal, *March 9*

In Latin America, Too, Talk of Land Reform Doesn't Match the Realities

"Men whose fathers for generations have worked land owned by others now work it as their own."

—LBJ's message to Congress on Latin America March 13

"The implementation of legislation affecting the agrarian structure is still slow; the distribution of land and other productive resources among the rural population remains very unequal, and potentially productive land, water and human resources are seriously underutilized in the rural areas. . . . Among the various types of land reform, slowest progress in 1966 was land redistribution. In Colombia, the land reform agency acquired or expropriated with compensation only 21,000 hectares . . . and established little more than 2,000 families. . . . In Chile only 1800 families received family-size parcels. . . . In the Dominican Republic, although several hundred thousand hectares of fertile land are in the possession of the Agrarian Institute, the rate of systematic settlement is currently only 1,000 families a year, or less than 0.5 percent of the number of families working on subsistence tracts of one hectare or less.

—Sixth Annual Report, 1966, Social Progress Trust Fund, Inter-American Development Bank, released Mar. 16.

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From Cuba to Southeast Asia, the CIA Has Been Wrong Consistently

(*Continued from Page One*)

Police." Critics, whether Russian or American, are *un.*

The Ochrana carried on not only intelligence but cloak-and-dagger activities. It had so thoroughly penetrated subversive and terrorist organizations that in some cases, as in that of the double agent Azef and the murder of the Prime Minister Stolypin, no one knows to this day whether it was the secret police using the terrorists or the terrorists using the secret police. Those who naively marvel at the CIA's use of liberal and left organizations will find that the Czar's operatives were way ahead of it. In Nineteenth Century Europe the ranks of the Anarchists were so full of Czarist agents that Anarchism was regarded as a kind of Czarist Comintern to subvert Western Europe. Kerensky in his own memoirs, "Russia and History's Turning Point," complains that the secret police in 1917 were "almost openly supporting the propaganda of Bolshevik defeatist organizations." Vassilyev in turn (like our own J. Edgar Hoover sneering at "pseudo-liberals") scornfully attacks the Russian "Liberals" (his quotation marks) for an "intellectualism" which "was absolutely opposed to the national spirit." For him, Kerensky was only a more subtle menace than Lenin.

Only Good at Murder

Vassilyev could boast that his network had informers everywhere, including members of the Russian Duma or Parliament. It could be said of the Ochrana, as it has been said of the CIA, that it knew everything and understood nothing. The cops never see the underlying grievances. For them, their *nigras* are always happy and contented until secret agitators upset them. It is said in our present controversy that CIA should be limited to intelligence and its cloak-and-dagger operations curtailed or ended. But its clearest successes have been its assassinations. There hasn't been a critical situation, from Cuba to Vietnam, in which the President couldn't get a clearer view of the real situation by carefully reading the newspapers (inadequate as they often are) than by reading his CIA reports. The CIA has been consistently wrong. Clarity of insight is not to be expected from the weird collection of renegades, scholar-mercenaries, Ivy League adventurers, superannuated military men, glorified hotel dicks and just plain corkscrew types that bulk so large in all our intelligence services.

If an omnipresent and well-heeled secret police makes for safety, the Czars should still be on their throne. If what the secret police call "naivete", and others call the democratic or libertarian tradition, is the real danger, then the Revolution when it came should have burst out not in Moscow but in London, where the British were "naive" enough to allow the arch revolutionaries of our time to work, study, write and agitate unmolested. By all the rules of CIA and FBI, Britain could not have made a greater mistake than to give Marx and Engels asylum. The lesson that revolutions are not made by conspiracies, nor stopped by assassins; that you cannot suppress revolutionary agitation without crippling the debate so necessary to healthy change, is one that every generation has to learn afresh. We are back again to fundamentals. The CIA, the FBI and the other networks would exchange those traditions of which the First Amendment is the symbol for the practices that have sickened the younger generation in Soviet society and alienated it, as we are in danger of alienating the best of our own.

Just Relaxing

"That reported Johnson-Kennedy rift got short shrift from the Kennedy brothers at the reception for the Democratic National Committee in the Washington Hilton last night. 'It's a myth,' said Sen. Ted Kennedy of Massachusetts. 'It's a mistake,' said Senator Robert Kennedy of New York, adding, 'I support President Johnson and Vice President Humphrey.' The reception drew hundreds of Democratic Party loyalists, a number of Senators and Congressmen, and, of course, the National Committeemen and Committeewomen who were 'just relaxing' after two days of speeches and serious politicking. But whenever the crowd was thickest, you were sure to find one or another of the Kennedy Senators."

—*Society page of* Washington Post *March 11*

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